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BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM

SEP 20 1999

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Date September 16, 1999

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program welcomes your participation. Please use the space below for your written comments (attach additional sheets if necessary).

Comments:

SEE ENCLOSED COMMENT

Name: James A. Akins

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Comments:

My name is Jim Akins. I am the Manager/Secretary of Saucelito Irrigation District which is located on the east side of the San Joaquin Valley and we receive surface water from the USBR and we are members of the Friant Water Users Authority.

I am also a 4th generation farmer and farm 80 acres of land located just west of Strathmore, CA. My farm is in the Lindmore Irrigation District which also receives water from the Friant Division of the USBR. I farm 40 acres of Prunes and 40 acres of cotton.

When we bought the farm in 1950, our water table was 95 feet. Shortly after the purchase of the farm, Lindmore I.D. completed its distribution system and we were able to use surface water in conjunction with our ground water. Since we are a conjunctive use farm, our water table has rising by more than 50 feet. During the drought in the late 80's and early 90's, our water table dropped back down to 60 feet.

This really shows us how important our surface water supply is to the east side of the valley. We are in an overdrafted ground water basin and if we do not have a reliable water supply, my grandchildren would have to give up the farm.

I have been the manager of Saucelito I.D. since the summer of 1989 and have really been through some rough times as far as fighting for an affordable and reliable surface water supply. In 1992, with the enactment of the CVPIA, our water costs have gone from \$10.00 per acre foot to \$40.00 per acre foot and the price I receive for my cotton has gone from 90 cents per pound down to 50 cents per pound. We can not survive at this rate.

IT WOULD SEEM TO ME THAT MORE EMPHASIS AND RESOURCES NEED TO BE PLACED ON DEVELOPING ADDITIONAL SURFACE WATER STORAGE. I LOOK TO CALFED TO PROVIDE THE LEADERSHIP THAT IS REQUIRED TO MOVE THIS PROGRAM ALONG MORE RAPIDLY. ADDITIONAL WATER SUPPLIES MUST BE DEVELOPED. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE FOR THE UPPER SAN JOAQUIN RIVER IF RIVER RESTORATION ACTIONS ARE TO BE PURSUED IN THE FUTURE.

I hope to someday turn my farm over to one of my grandchildren. If CALFED and the government cannot assure us a more affordable and reliable water supply, I foresee losing our family farm and many of my neighbors also will lose. We put a lot of money into our local, state and federal economy.

Sincerely,


James A. Akins